



## Public Safety Communications Highlights

- All 56 of Montana's counties have now submitted their NECP Communications Capabilities Reports. Congratulations! (See related article)
- PSSB continues to provide assistance for license narrowbanding. Contact Scott Bradford at [sbradford@mt.gov](mailto:sbradford@mt.gov) for additional information.
- On June 26, a soils contractor obtained core samples at the NE Billings site. These are analyzed so that structural engineers can better design the tower foundation, which allows tower vendors to more accurately estimate construction costs.

## Deputy Statewide Interoperability Coordinator Named

On Mon, July 2, Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB) Chief Quinn Ness was named Deputy Statewide Interoperability Coordinator. In addition to his Bureau Chief duties, Quinn will be assisting the SWIC in performing the following duties as outlined in Executive Order 13-2012:



- Oversee the daily operation of the state's interoperability efforts under the guidance of the SIGB to include grants coordination, outreach and policy development.
- Coordinate interoperability and communications projects.
- Maintain governance structures.
- Assemble work groups to develop and implement key initiatives.
- Update and implement the Statewide Communications Interoperability Plan.

Congratulations Quinn!

## NECP Capabilities Reporting Reaches 100%

We are delighted to announce that Montana's National Emergency Communications Plan (NECP). County Communications Capabilities reporting has now reached 100%! Performance evaluation completion has increased to 61%.

Three more counties have submitted both their communications capabilities and performance evaluation reports as part of Montana's NECP reporting requirements.

Kudos go to Candy Loehding, Carter Co. DES; Sheriff Bill Cassell, Petroleum Co.; and Sheriff Steve Immenschuh, Granite County. We're also pleased to recognize Daniels, Teton and Treasure Counties for submitting their capabilities reports. Thank you!



Click [here](#) for the county performance survey. Completed reports should be e-mailed to E. Wing Spooner, [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov). Anyone with questions is encouraged to call her at 406-444-2491.

On behalf of Warren Dupuis, Statewide Interoperability Coordinator, and the entire PSSB team, a big "Thank You" goes out to Wing Spooner for her outstanding effort in assisting with Montana's achievement of this compliance milestone!

## National vs. Montana Narrowbanding Statistics

According to data from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), as of July 11, 37.4% of VHF and UHF licenses across the nation were still operating in wideband-only mode. In Montana, 30% of licenses are still licensed in wideband-only mode.



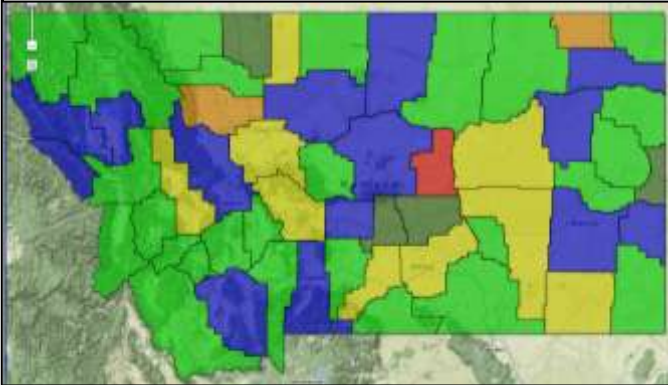
Montana is making great strides in complying with the Jan. 1, 2013 mandate, but still has a ways to go. Montana's progress, reflected from Call Sign information, is illustrated in the table to the right.

The map on the next page shows Montana's narrowbanding progress on a county-by-county basis.

US and Montana Narrowband License Status By Call Sign		
Narrowband Only (12.5 kHz)		
	Number	Percentage
United States	23,040	23.5%
Montana	227	19.4%
Both Narrow- and Wideband (12.5/25 kHz)		
United States	38,339	39.1%
Montana	594	50.6%
Wideband Only (25 kHz)		
United States	36,600	37.4%
Montana	352	30%
Total Licenses		
United States	97,979	
Montana	1,173	

# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

## Licenses in Montana with Only Wideband (25 kHz) Emission Designators



**Source:** Public Safety Technical Assistance Tools Website ([http://www.publicsafetytools.info/narrowband/national\\_tracking.php](http://www.publicsafetytools.info/narrowband/national_tracking.php)). Accessed July 9, 2012 – Green represents the highest percentage of compliance; red is the least.

Some outstanding narrowbanding resources are available to assist jurisdictions in meeting their narrowbanding goals. These include the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Emergency Communications' (OEC) narrowbanding status tracking tool at <http://publicsafetytools.info> and the National Public Safety Telecommunications Council (NPSTC) list of people who have volunteered to be points of contact to assist in narrowbanding, at [www.npstc.org/narrowbanding.jsp](http://www.npstc.org/narrowbanding.jsp).

For more information about national narrowbanding progress, you may want to read the "Narrowbanding Numbers" article in the June 13, 2012 issue of *MissionCritical Communications* magazine, [www.MCCmag.com](http://www.MCCmag.com).

## A Spectrum Minute: "Line A" Coordination Zone Explained

What is "Line A"? "Line A" is an imaginary line within the US that approximately follows the 48<sup>th</sup> Parallel across the State of Montana, approximately 75 miles south of the U.S./Canadian border (a similar zone exists on the Canadian side, 'Line B', as shown in the Coordination Zone Map to the right). Through international treaty, the area between "Line A" and the U.S./Canada border is called "the coordination zone." In simple terms, this means any frequency spectrum use within this zone must be coordinated with the neighboring nation. FCC "Line A" Regulations are meant to protect Canadian and U.S. land mobile operations near the U.S./Canadian border from interference.

Montana's 545-mile border with three provinces of Canada (Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan) creates frequency licensing challenges. Spectrum interests of both countries require frequency licenses needed above "Line A"

must be coordinated with each other. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulates use of non-Federal spectrum use in the United States—including that used by tribal, state and local public safety agencies—while Industry Canada (IC) manages Canada's national radio frequency spectrum.



With the significant needs of public safety and business users in both nations, there is a great demand for frequency resources. This makes frequency coordination work difficult, yet essential, if radio frequencies used within the coordination zone are not to adversely affect any established U.S or Canadian operations.

The FCC offers a "Line A & C Program" where individuals may enter the coordinates of their location, and the program will indicate if it is south of Line A or west of "Line C". To learn more about frequency coordination above Line A, please visit: <http://wtbwww05.fcc.gov/cgi-bin/scripts/lineac.pl>.

## Upcoming Meetings & Training Sessions

- **Tues., July 17: The State Agency Radio Users Task Force Meeting is *Cancelled***
- **Tuesday, July 24: SIGB Technical Team Mtg.**  
Lewistown • 10:00 am  
Lewistown Police Dept. Training Rm.  
305 W. Watson St.
- **Thurs., Aug. 2: Northern Tier Consortium**  
Havre • 10:00 am - 12:30 pm  
Hill County Detention Center Courtroom Mtg. Area  
1450 2<sup>nd</sup> St. West
- **Tues., Aug. 7: Statewide Interoperability Governing Board (SIGB)**  
Helena • 10:00 am - noon  
State Capitol, Room 152  
[http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/councils/sigb/08072012\\_meeting.mcp](http://itsd.mt.gov/policy/councils/sigb/08072012_meeting.mcp)
- **Sat.-Sun., Aug. 25-26: DHS OEC AUXCOMM Course**  
Billings • 8:00 am - 6:00 pm each day  
MSU College of Technology (COT), 1500 University Dr.  
Pre-reqs: IS-700, IS-800, ICS-100, ICS-200, General Class or higher Ham license  
POC: Todd Gansel, [AE7V@arll.net](mailto:AE7V@arll.net) or [ae7v.mt@gmail.com](mailto:ae7v.mt@gmail.com)